



February 5, 2009

Governor Bobby Jindal
Office of the Governor
900 3rd Street
5th Floor
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Dear Governor Jindal,

As President of the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB), I am writing to inform you of a recent decision by our Executive Committee. We will not hold the Society's 2011 annual meeting in New Orleans even though the city has been a popular venue of us in the past, and we received a reasonable site and organization package for the meeting. The Executive Committee voted to hold the 2011 meeting in Salt Lake City in large part because of legislation SB 561, which you signed into law in June 2008. It is the firm opinion of SICB's leadership that this law undermines the integrity of science and science education in Louisiana.

SICB is a non-profit professional scientific society with more than 2300 members, including many in the State of Louisiana. Our members study in a wide range of biological fields, including physiology, ecology, behavior, genetics, development, and evolution. The questions SICB members address are unified and answered through the application of modern scientific research methodologies and theoretical constructs, including evolution.

SICB wrote to the Louisiana legislators opposing SB 561. After the bill passed both the House and the Senate, we joined the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) and other national scientific organizations in urging you to veto this legislation.

The SICB leadership could not support New Orleans as our meeting venue because of the official position of the state in weakening science education and specifically attacking evolution in science curricula. Utah, in contrast, passed a resolution that states that evolution is central to any science curriculum.

The 2009 SICB meeting that just closed in Boston brought over 1850 scientists and graduate students to the city for five days. Biological scientists and graduate students from around the world met to share the latest research within the broad interests of integrative and comparative biology. As you might imagine, a professional meeting with nearly 2000 participants can contribute to the economic engine of any community.

SICB is joining other scientific organizations in suggesting professional societies reconsider any plans to host meetings in Louisiana. As scientists, it is our responsibility to oppose anti-science initiatives. We urge you to take actions to repeal SB 561 in the upcoming legislative session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Satterlie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Richard Satterlie, President
SICB Executive Committee
Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology